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AN

# A C C O U N T

OF THE

## M A N N E R

IN WHICH THE

PERSONS CONFINED IN THE PRISONS OF PARIS  
WERE TRIED AND PUT TO DEATH,

On the 2d and 3d of SEPTEMBER 1792.

By an EYE-WITNESS.

*Joseph St. Meard*

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THE THIRD EDITION.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for JOHN STOCKDALE, Piccadilly.

M.DCC.XCIII.

[ Price One Shilling, or Two Guineas per Hundred. ]

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# ACCOUNT, &c.

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## THE THIRTY-EIGHT HOURS AGONY

OF

M. JOURGNIAC SAINT MÉARD.

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### CHAP. I.

*Fourteen Hours at the Committee of Inspection appointed from  
the Commune of Paris.*

**T**HIS Committee ordered me to be arrested the 22d of August. I was hurried to the town-house at nine o'clock in the morning, where I remained till eleven o'clock at night. Two gentlemen, members, no doubt, of that committee, made me go into a hall : one of them, worn out with fatigue, fell asleep ; the other, who did not sleep, asked me if I was M. Jourgniac Saint Méard.

I answered, "Yes."

"Sit

" Sit down, we are all equal. Do you know why you  
" have been arrested ?"

" One of those who conducted me here told me that I  
" was suspected of being the conductor of an anti-consti-  
" tutional journal. Suspect—is not the word; for I know  
" that Gautier, who passes for the conductor of the Court  
" and City Journal, is a fictitious person."

" Your easiness of belief has been imposed upon, Sir,  
" for it will be as little difficult to prove his physical exist-  
" ence, as that he is the conductor of that paper."

" I must believe"—

" Nothing but the truth, because you are just, since you  
" are a judge; besides, I give you my word of honour"—

" Oh, Sir, words of honour are entirely out of the ques-  
" tion now."

" So much the worse, Sir, for mine is sacred."

" You are accused of having been upon the frontiers  
" about ten or eleven months ago; of having raised recruits,  
" whom you conducted to the emigrants. On your re-  
" turn you was arrested, and escaped out of prison."

" If I could believe that this was a serious accusation, the  
" indulgence of a single hour would be sufficient for me  
" to prove that I have not been out of Paris these  
" three and twenty months. And if"—

" Oh! I know, Sir, that you possess ingenuity enough,  
" and that by your craftiness you would find"—

" Give me leave to observe that the word craftiness is mis-  
" applied; we have only to do with absurdities, in talking  
" of the accusations brought against me."

" Do you know Mr. Derosoi, the conductor of the Paris  
" Gazette?"

" Very well by reputation, but nothing more; for I have  
" never even seen him."

" You



"You astonish me; for letters which you have written to him have been found amongst his papers."

"One letter only can have been found there; for I never wrote but one to him, inclosing a speech I made to the light infantry of my company, at the time of the insurrection of the garrison of Nanci, which he had printed in the Paris Gazette: that is all the intercourse I have had with him."

"Very right; and I must also tell you, that that letter does not give any ground of suspicion against you."

"Not any one of my letters, writings, or actions, can give any ground of suspicion against me."

"I have seen you at Madam Vanfleury's; I have seen you too with Mr. Peltier, compiler of the Acts of the Apostles."

"Very likely, for I sometimes go to that lady's house, and I frequently walk with Peltier."

"Are you not a Knight of the Order of St. Louis?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Why don't you wear the cross of it?"

"There it is, I have constantly worn it for six years."

"Enough for this time; I will acquaint the Committee that you are here."

"Be kind enough to tell them also, that if they do me justice, they will set me at liberty; for I am neither conductor of a paper, recruiter, conspirator, nor accuser."

A moment afterwards three soldiers beckoned me to follow them. When we were in the court, they desired me to get into a hackney-coach with them, which set off, after they had given orders to the coachman to drive us to the hotel of the Fauxbourg Saint Germain,

## C H A P. II.

*Ten Days at the Abbey.*

**W**HEN we were arrived at the hotel, so called by my companions, which proved to be the prison of the abbey, they delivered me, with my commitment, to the keeper, who, after the usual phrase, "It is to be hoped that it will not be for a long time," ordered me to be put into a large hall, which served as a chapel to the prisoners under the old government. I counted nineteen persons lying upon the packing of beds: I had M. Dangremont's, whose head had been cut off two days before.

On the same day, and at the very same moment we were going to sit down at table, M. Chantereine, colonel of the King's household, established by the constitution, stabbed himself with a knife in three places, after having said, "We are all doomed to be massacred—my God, I am coming to thee!" He died two minutes after.

The 23d I drew up a memorial, in which I laid open the baseness of my accusers. I sent copies of it to the minister of justice, to my section, to the committee of inspection, and to all those whom I knew were concerned for the injustice I was experiencing.

About five o'clock in the evening, M. Derosoi, conductor of the Paris Gazette, was added to our number as a fellow-sufferer. As soon as he heard my name mentioned, he said to me, after the usual compliments, "Ah, Sir, how happy I am to meet with you! I have loved you a long time, and yet I know you only from the affair at Nanci: permit a wretch, whose last hour is approaching, to open his heart to you." I embraced him: he gave me a letter



to read, which he had just received, and in which one of his female friends wrote to him :

“ My friend, prepare yourself for death !---you are condemned, and to-morrow---my heart is ready to burst ;  
“ but you know what I promised you. Farewell.”

Whilst he was reading this letter, I saw tears trickle down his face : he kissed it several times ; and I heard him say, in a low faltering voice, “ Alas ! she will suffer much more than I !” He threw himself upon my bed, and weary with talking of the means, which had been employed to accuse and arrest us, we dropt to sleep. At break of day he drew up a memorial for his own justification, which, although written with energy, and strengthened by facts, produced no favourable effect ; for his head was cut off the next day, after the method proposed by Guillot.

The 25th. The commissaries of the prison, *at length*, indulged us with the sight of an evening paper.

There was in the vestry of the chapel, which served as a prison, a captain of the regiment of Swiss Guards, called Reding, who, at the affair of the 10th of August, received a shot which broke his arm ; he had besides received four cuts upon his head with a sabre : some citizens saved him and carried him to an hotel, from whence he was dragged, in order to be committed to prison at the abbey, where his arm was set for the second time.

The 26th. At midnight a municipal officer entered our room to take down our names, and the day on which we were arrested : he gave us to understand, that the municipality would send commissaries the next day, in order to release such of us as had been accused without foundation. This intelligence gave me a tolerably good night's rest ;

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but the event did not take place; on the contrary, the number of prisoners still increased.

The 27th. We heard the report of a pistol, which was let off in the inner part of the prison. Immediately upon this there was a running with violence on the stair-case and passages, and an opening and shutting hastily of locks and bolts. Our room was then entered, when one of our turnkeys, after counting us over, bid us be easy, that the danger was over. This was all that this rough and silent fellow would tell us of the matter.

The 28th and 29th. Our attention was only diverted by the arrival of carriages bringing prisoners every moment: we could see them from a turret communicating with our room, the windows of which looked into St. Marguerite's Street. We afterwards paid severely for the pleasure we had in hearing and seeing what passed in the square and in the street, and particularly opposite the door of our prison.

The 30th. At eleven o'clock at night, an old man about fourscore was put to bed in our room. We found the next day that it was the *Sieur Cazotte*, the author of some well-known poems. The wild gaiety of this old man, and his Eastern turn of expression, a little relieved our sorrows. He took great pains to persuade us, by the history of Cain and Abel, that we were much happier than those who enjoyed liberty. He appeared to be very sorry that we seemed not to be persuaded of it. I made him very angry, when I told him that it was a much more happy circumstance for persons in our situation to believe in predestination than in his doctrine. Two soldiers, who came to take him to the Criminal Tribunal, put an end to the discussion. I lost no time in procuring certificates that might be of use in proving the truths stated in my memorial. In this I  
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had



had the assistance of a friend, but of such an one as is not now to be found, who, whilst my unfortunate companions were deserted by their's, laboured night and day to serve me. He did not consider that, in a moment of fermentation and suspicion, he might run the same risque as myself, and that he rendered himself suspicious, by interesting himself for a suspected prisoner: nothing restrained him, and he has proved to me the truth of the proverb, "adversity is the touchstone of friendship." It is, in a great measure, to his assiduity and zeal that I am indebted for my life; and it is a duty I owe to the public, to myself, and to truth, to give the name of this honest man. It is M. Tefrier, a merchant, who lives in the street called *Croix des petits Champs*.

The last days of the month of August brought to my mind the dreadful situation I was in at the affair of Nanci. I strained my imagination to compare the dangers I was now running with those I had then run, when the army, composed of the regiments of the King, of *Mestre de Camp*, of *Chateaufieux*, and of some battalions of National Guards, appointed me its general, and made me conduct it to *Lunéville*, in order to take General *Malseigne* from the carabineers.

The 1st of September. Three of our companions were set at liberty, who were much less surprised at their release than they had been at being arrested, for they were the most staunch patriots of their sections. Some others were let out from the adjoining rooms, amongst whom was M. de *Jaucourt*, a member of the *Legislative Assembly*, who some time before had resigned.

## C H A P. III.

*The beginning of my Agony, of 38 Hours.*

**S**UNDAY, the 2d of September. Our turnkey brought our dinner sooner than usual: his haggard countenance and his wild looks seemed to portend something disastrous. At two o'clock he returned. We assembled around him: he was deaf to all our questions; and after having, contrary to his custom, collected all the knives, which we generally took care to put into our napkins, he sent out in a hurry the nurse of the Swiss officer Reding.

At half past two, the terrifying noise of the people was frightfully increased by the noise of the drums beating to arms, by the three alarm-guns which were fired, and by the alarm-bell, which was heard on every side. During these moments of terror, we saw three carriages pass, accompanied by innumerable crowds of men and women, crying out like furies, *à la force, à la force*, meaning to slaughter. These carriages were driven to the cloister of the abbey, which had been converted into prisons for the priests. In an instant afterwards, we heard that all the bishops and the other priests had been massacred, who, according to the term, had been *folded* there.

About 4 o'clock.---The dreadful shrieks of a man, whom they were hacking with a sabre, drew us to the window of the turret, from whence we saw, opposite to the gate of our prison, the body of a man stretched out dead upon the ground; immediately afterwards another was massacred, and so on.



It is utterly impossible to describe the horror of the profound and dreary silence, which prevailed during the executions, and which was only interrupted by the cries of the victims, and the sound of the blows of the sabres upon their heads: they were no sooner felled to the ground, than a murmuring began, which was followed by cries of *Vive la nation*, a thousand times more dreadful to us than the horrors of the silence which preceded them.

Between one massacre and another, we heard these words under our windows: "We must not let one of them escape; they must all be put to death, and especially those who are in the chapel, where there are none but conspirators."

It was of us they were speaking; and I think I need not say, that we frequently wished for the happiness of those who were shut up in the most gloomy dungeons.

Every species of the most terrifying apprehensions tormented us, and forced us from our mournful and sad reflections. If there was but a moment's silence in the street, it was interrupted by the noise within the prison.

At 5 o'clock.—M. Cazotte was loudly called for by many voices. Immediately after we heard a number of people upon the stairs, talking very loud, a clashing of arms, and cries of men and women. It was that old man, attended by his daughter, whom they were dragging away. As soon as he had passed the prison gate, this courageous daughter threw her arms round the neck of her father. The people, moved at this sight, sued for the old man's pardon, and obtained it.

About 7 o'clock.—We saw two men enter our room, whose bloody hands were armed with hangers; they were conducted by a turnkey, with a torch in his hand, who pointed out to them the bed of the unfortunate Reding. In this dreadful moment I pressed his hand, and endeavoured

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to keep up his courage. One of these men set about carrying him off; but this unhappy creature stopped him, saying, with a dying voice, "Ah! Sir, I have suffered enough; I am not afraid of dying, for God's sake put me to death here!" These words staggered him, but his companion, by looking at him, and saying come, come, decided him. He then dragged him away, threw him upon his shoulders, and carried him into the street, where death awaited him. My eyes are so full of tears that I can no longer see what I am writing.

We looked at one another without uttering a word; we wrung each other's hands; we clasped each other in our arms. Motionless, in gloomy silence, we fixed our eyes upon the floor of our prison, which was lighted by the moon, where the triple bars of the windows did not cast a shade. But soon the shrieks of new victims threw us into our former agitation, and recalled to our recollection the last words uttered by M. Chanteraine, when he plunged the knife into his breast: "We are all doomed to be massacred."

At midnight.---Ten men, with sabres in their hands, preceded by two turnkeys with torches, entered our prison, and ordered us to range ourselves at the foot of our beds. After having counted us, they told us, that we were answerable for each other, and swore, that if a single one escaped, we should all be massacred without being heard by the President. These last words gave us a gleam of hope, for we did not yet know, whether we should be heard before we were put to death.

Monday, 2 o'clock in the morning.---One of the prison gates was violently beat down: we at first thought it was the inner wicket that was broke open to massacre us in our rooms; but our fears were a little removed, upon hearing it



it said on the stair-case, that it was the door of the dungeon where some prisoners had barricaded themselves. A little while after we heard, that they had butchered every one that was found there.

At ten o'clock.---The Abbé l'Enfant, the King's Confessor, and the Abbé de Chapt de Rastignac, appeared in the gallery of the chapel, which served us for a prison, into which they had got through a door that opened on the stair-case. They announced to us, that our last hour was approaching, and desired us to compose ourselves, in order to receive their benediction.

An electrical motion, which it is impossible to define, threw us all upon our knees, and with uplifted hands we received it. This moment, though consoling, was one of the most—we experienced.—Upon the eve of appearing before the Supreme Being, and on our knees before two of his ministers, we presented a spectacle not to be described. The age of these two old men, their position above us, death hovering over our heads, and surrounding us on every side; every thing conspired to give to this ceremony a solemn and mournful aspect:—it brought us nearer to the Deity; it inspired us with courage; all reasoning was suspended, and the most cold and incredulous amongst us was as much affected as the most ardent and the most susceptible.

Half an hour afterwards these two priests were massacred, and we heard their shrieks! - - -

Is there a man who can read the following particulars without having his eyes filled with tears, and without feeling the chill and shudderings of death? Is there one whose blood will not curdle with horror, and whose hair will not even stand on end?

Our most important occupation was, to consider of the attitude in which we should put ourselves to receive death with the least possible pain, when we should be called upon  
to

to enter the place of slaughter. We every now and then sent some of our companions to the window of the turret, in order to know in what position the unhappy wretches, who were suffering death, placed themselves in the moment of their execution, that we might determine, from their report, in what manner it would be best for us to meet it. They informed us, that those who put their hands over their heads suffered much longer, because the strokes of the sabre were weakened before they reached the head; and that sometimes even the hands and arms fell before the body; and that those who put them behind their backs probably felt much less.

On these horrid considerations were our thoughts employed. We reasoned on the preference to be given to this last-mentioned attitude, and advised each other to take it, when it should come to our turn to be massacred !!!

About noon,---Quite overwhelmed by more than supernatural agitation, and absorbed in reflections horrid beyond all expression, I threw myself upon a bed, and fell fast asleep. I am fully persuaded that I owe my existence to this moment of sleep; during which it seemed to me that I was before the tremendous tribunal that was to judge me; that I was listened to with attention, notwithstanding the terrifying noise of the alarm-bell, and the cries which I fancied I heard; and that, after finishing my defence, I was discharged. This dream was so soothing to my mind, that it entirely dissipated my uneasiness, and I awoke with a prepossession that it would be realized. I related the particulars of it to my companions in misfortune, who were astonished at the confidence I preserved from this moment to the time of my appearance before my terrible judges.

At two o'clock, a proclamation was read, which seemed to be ill received by the people: a moment afterwards some persons, from curiosity, or perhaps from an incli-



inclination to point out to us the means of making our escape, reared a ladder against the window of our room; but they were hindered from getting up, by a cry of "down, down; it is only to carry them arms."

The torments of the most choking thirst were united to the anguish of mind we felt every moment. At length our turnkey, Bertrand, appeared alone, and we prevailed upon him to bring us a pitcher of water, which we drank with so much the more avidity, as for 26 hours we had not been able to get a single drop. We spoke of this neglect to a federate, who came with some other persons to inspect our prison: he was so much enraged at it, that he asked us the name of the turnkey, and assured us that he would exterminate him: he certainly would have done it, for he said so; and it was only by the most urgent entreaties, that we obtained his pardon.

This small alleviation was soon disturbed by the moanful cries we heard over our heads: we perceived they came from the gallery; we gave notice of it to all those who passed upon the stairs. At last they went into the gallery, and we were told that it was a young officer who had wounded himself in several places, but not mortally, as the blade of his knife, being round at the point, could not penetrate. This attempt served only to hasten his execution.

At eight o'clock the fury of the people began to subside, and we heard several voices crying out, "Pardon, pardon for those that are left." These words were applauded, but faintly. A gleam of hope however diffused itself over us; some indeed believed their release to be so near at hand, that they had already got their bundle under their arm; but soon fresh cries of death plunged us into agonies again.

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I had formed an intimacy with the Sieur Mauffabr , who had been arrested for being Aide de Camp to M. de Brisfac: he had often given proofs of courage, but the fear of being assassinated had compressed his heart. I had however in some degree succeeded in dissipating his anxiety, when he came and threw himself into my arms, saying, "*My friend, it is all over with me, I have just heard my name mentioned in the street.*"

It was in vain for me to tell him that it might perhaps be some persons who interested themselves for him; that, besides, fear could be of no use, but, on the contrary, might prove his destruction. Every remonstrance was useless; his head was so far gone, that not finding a place in the chapel to hide himself, he got up the vestry-room chimney, where he was stopped by the grates, which he had the madness to attempt to break with his head. We entreated him to come down, and after much ado he returned to us, but he did not recover his senses. This was the occasion of his death, of which I shall soon make mention,

The Sieur Emard, who the day before had given me instructions for making his will, communicated to me the reasons for his being arrested. I thought them so unjust, that, to give him a proof how certain I was that he would not suffer, I made him a present of a silver medal, desiring him to keep it, and shew it me in ten years. If he read this article it will remind him of his promise. If we have not seen one another, it is not my fault; for I know not where to find him, and he knows where I am.

At eleven o'clock, ten persons armed with sabres and pistols ordered us to follow them one by one, and conducted us into the second passage, next to the little room in which sat the Tribunal that was to try us. I, with caution, drew near to one of the sentinels that guarded us, and by degrees contrived to enter into conversation with him:



him: he told me in a gibberish, which indicated to me that he was from Provence or Languedoc, that he had served in the regiment of Lyonnois for eight years. I spoke to him in his country dialect, which appeared to please him, and the interest I had in pleasing him gave me such a flow of eloquence in his language, that I made him my friend so much, as to draw from him such expressions, as it is impossible for any one to set a proper value upon, who has not been in the situation in which I then was: "*I don't know thee, but yet I don't think that thou art a traitor; on the contrary, I take thee to be a good fellow.*"

I ransacked my imagination to find out any thing that could tend to confirm him in this favourable opinion of me: in this I succeeded, for I prevailed upon him to let me go into the tremendous chamber to see a prisoner tried—I saw two; the one a purveyor to the King, who, being accused of conspiracy on the 10th of August, was condemned and executed: the other, who wept and could hardly speak, was already stripped, and was going out to be executed, when he was recognised by a workman in Paris, who affirmed that he was mistaken for another person. He was then sent away until farther information could be had. I have since heard that he was declared to be innocent.

What I had just seen guided me as to the manner in which I should make my defence. I went back into the second chamber, where I saw some prisoners just brought from without. I desired my Provence friend to get me a glass of wine; he was going for it, when he was ordered to conduct me back to the chapel, where I returned, without being able to discover why we had been sent for: there I found ten fresh prisoners, who succeeded five of those who had been tried. I had no time to lose in composing a new defence: I was at work upon it, being well

convinced that nothing but firmness and frankness could save me, when in came my friend of Provence, who, after having told the turnkey to shut the door with the key only, and wait for him without, came up to me and said, after having taken me by the hand, "I am come on thy account; there is the wine thou didst ask me for, drink." I had drunk more than half of it, when he took hold of the bottle, and said to me, "Sacre di, my friend, how thou drink'st; I want some myself; to thy health." He drank the rest. "I cannot stay long with thee, but remember what I say to thee—if thou art a priest, or a conspirator belonging to M. Veto, 'tis all over with thee, but if thou art not a traitor be not afraid, I'll answer for thy life."—"Ah! my friend, I am sure not to be accused of any thing of that sort; but I do pass for being a little of an aristocrat."

"That's nothing; the Judges know very well that there are honest men every where. The President is an honest man, and no fool. Be so kind as to beg of the Judges to hear me; that is all I desire. — Thou shalt be heard, I'll answer for it. Well, good bye, my friend; take courage, I am going back to my post; I will endeavour to make thy turn come as soon as possible; let us take leave; I am thine with all my heart."

After embracing each other he went away.

To be sensible of the influence this little conversation had upon my hopes, and how much it strengthened them, a man must have been a prisoner in the Abbey on the 3d of September, 1792.

About midnight the uncommon noise, which had not ceased for full 36 hours, began to abate: we thought that our judges and their executive power, (for so the murderers were called) being worn out with fatigue, we should not be tried till after they had taken some rest; so we were



putting our beds a little to rights, when another proclamation was made, which was generally hooted at. A little after a man desired leave to speak, and we heard him say very distinctly to the people; "The priests and conspirators that are left, and are in that prison, have been bribing the judges, that is the reason why they do not try them." Scarce had he uttered these words, when we thought we heard them knocking him on the head. The noise and commotion of the people became terribly vehement, the noise increased every moment, and the ferment was at its height, when they came for M. Defon, formerly a life-guard, whose death-cries we soon after heard. In a short time two more of our companions were torn from us, which made me conclude, that my last hour was approaching.

At last, on Tuesday at one o'clock in the morning, after having suffered an agony of 37 hours, to which death itself cannot be compared, after having drunk a thousand times of the cup of bitterness, my prison-door was opened:—I am called—I appear—three men seize me, and drag me before the dreadful tribunal.

#### C H A P. IV.

##### *The last Crisis of my Agony.*

**B**Y the light of two torches I beheld the dreadful tribunal, which was to decide on my life or death. The President, in a grey coat, with a hanger by his side, stood leaning against a table, on which were papers, an inkstand, pipes, and some bottles. There were ten persons round  
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this table, some sitting, some standing, two of whom were in waistcoats with aprons on; others were sleeping upon benches. Two men in shirts all over blood, with hangers in their hands, guarded the door of the chamber; an old turnkey had his hand on the bolts; three men were holding before the President a prisoner, who appeared to be about 60 years of age.

I was placed in a corner of the room; my keepers crossed their hangers over my breast, and told me, that if I made the least attempt to get away they would stab me. Upon looking about for my Provence friend, I saw two national guards present to the President a petition from the section of *La Croix Rouge*, on behalf of the prisoner before him. He told them, that petitions in favour of traitors were useless; upon which the prisoner exclaimed, "It is horrible! Your judgement is an assassination:" To which the President replied, "I wash my hands of it.\* Take away M. Maillé." No sooner were the words pronounced than they pushed him into the street, where I saw him massacred through the opening of the door of the prison.

I have frequently found myself in dangerous situations, and have always had the happiness to be able to command myself; but in this, the horror inseparable from every thing that passed around me would have overwhelmed me, had it not been for the conversation I had with my friend of Provence, and especially for my dream, which always came back into my mind.

The President sat down to write, and after he had probably taken down the name of the unfortunate man just dispatched, I heard him say, "Now another." I was then

\* I thought I perceived that the President pronounced this sentence with reluctance.—Several killers had come into the room, and caused great ferment there.



dragged before this expeditious and bloody tribunal, where the best protection was to be without any, and where all the resources of the mind were of no avail, unless founded upon truth. Two of my keepers held my hands, and a third had hold of my collar.

*The President speaking to me.]* "Your name, your profession?"

*One of the Judges.]* "The least lie undoes you."

"My name is Jourgniac Saint Méard; I have served five and twenty years in the capacity of an officer; and I appear before your tribunal with the confidence of a man who has nothing to reproach himself with, and who consequently will not tell a lie."

*The President.]* "We shall see that;—one moment;—Do you know the cause of your arrest?"

"Yes, Mr. President; and I am persuaded, from the falsity of the accusations brought against me, that the Committee of Inspection \* \* \* \* would not have ordered me to be imprisoned, had it not been for the precautions which the safety of the people obliged them to take.

"I am accused of being the conductor of the Journal Antifeuillant, entitled the Court and City Journal;—The truth is, that it is not so: it is one Gautier, whose appearance bears so little resemblance to mine, that it must have been out of mere malice that I have been taken for him; and if I could have put my hand into my pocket"——

I made a motion, but in vain, to get at my pocket-book; one of the judges observing it, said to those who held me, "let his hands loose." I then laid upon the table the certificates of many clerks, factors, tradesmen, and

\* Here he looked at the jailor's books, and the accusations, which he shewed the Judges.

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housekeepers; with whom he had lodged, to prove that Mr. Gautier was the conductor and sole proprietor of that Journal.

*One of the Judges.]* “After all, there is no smoke without some fire; you must tell us why you are accused of this.”

“That is what I was just going to do: you know, Gentlemen, that this Journal was a sort of repository for puns, riddles, epigrams, and jests of all sorts that were circulating in Paris and the 83 departments. I might say, that I have never composed any thing in this way for that Journal, since no manuscript of mine can appear; but my ingenuofness, which has always been my friend, will to-day be again of service to me; and I must own, that the gaiety of my temper often inspired me with conceits, which I sent to the Sieur Gautier. This is, Gentlemen, the long and short of this mighty accusation, which is as absurd and ridiculous, as that which I am going to mention is monstrous. I am accused of having been upon the frontiers—of having raised recruits there—and of having conducted them to the emigrants.”

This produced a general murmur, at which I was not in the least disconcerted; and, raising my voice, said, “Gentlemen, I have obtained leave to speak, and I beg permission of the President to be allowed to go on with my speech, as I never stood in greater need of being heard.”

*Almost all the Judges laughing said,]* “It is just, it is just —silence.”

“My accuser is a monster, and this truth I will prove to judges, whom the people would not have chosen, had they not been thought capable of distinguishing the innocent from the guilty. Here, Gentlemen, are certifi-  
“cates,



"cates, to prove that I have not been out of Paris *these*  
*three and twenty months.* Here also are declarations of  
 "housekeepers with whom I have lodged for some time,  
 "which affirm the same thing." They were looking them  
 over, when we were interrupted by the arrival of a pri-  
 soner, who took my place before the President. Those  
 who had hold of him said, that it was *another* priest that  
 had been taken from *his nest* in the chapel. After a very  
 short examination he was ordered for execution. He threw  
 his prayer-book upon the table, and was immediately drag-  
 ged away and massacred. After this dispatch was made, I  
 appeared again before the tribunal.

*One of the Judges.]* "I do not say, that these certificates  
 "are false; but who is to prove to us that they are true?"

"Your observation is just, Sir; and that you may be  
 "enabled to judge with certainty, order me into a dun-  
 "geon, until any commissioners the President may please  
 "to name, shall have proved their authenticity.—If they  
 "are false I deserve to die."

*One of the Judges, who, during my examination seemed to  
 interest himself for me, said with a low voice,]* "A guilty man  
 "could not speak with this confidence."

*Another Judge.]* "Of what section are you?"

"Of the section of the corn market."

*A National Guard, who did not belong to the Bench.]* "Ah!  
 "I belong to that section. With whom do you live?"

"With M. Teyffier, in the street Croix des Petits  
 "Champs."

*The National Guard.]* "I know him; we have trans-  
 "acted business together, and I can tell whether that cer-  
 "tificate be his.—"

*Upon looking at it he said,]* "Gentlemen, I can vouch for  
 "this being the signature of the citizen Teyffier."

With what pleasure I should have leaped round the neck of this tutelary angel ! but the important and serious business I had prevented me ; and before he had well finished, I exclaimed, in a manner that excited the attention of all present, saying—" Ah ! Gentlemen, after the testimony of this honest man, who has proved the falsity of an accusation that might have cost me my life, what idea can you have of my accuser ?"

*The Judge who appeared to interest himself for me.]* " He is a villain ; and if he was here we would make an example of him :—Do you know him ?"

" No, Sir ; but he must probably be at the Committee of Inspection \* \* \* \* ; and I own, that if I did know him, I should think I rendered a piece of service to the public by posting him up as a person to be shunned like a mad dog."

*One of the Judges.]* " It appears, that you are not a *journalist*, and that you have not *raised* recruits ; but you have said not a word about the aristocratical conversations you have held at the Palais Royal in booksellers' shops."

" Why should I not ? I have not been afraid to confess what I have written, and I shall have still less apprehension of avowing what I have said, or even what I have thought.—I have always advised obedience to the laws, and set the example ; at the same time I have availed myself of the advantage given me by the *constitution*, to say that I found it imperfect, because it appeared to me to place us all in a false position. If saying this be a crime, then the constitution itself has drawn me into a snare, and the opening which it gave me to point out its defects is nothing more than lying in wait for my destruction. I have also said, that almost all the nobles of the constituent assembly, who appeared such zealous



" patriots, laboured much more to satisfy their own inter-  
 " rests and ambition, than to serve their country; and  
 " when the whole of Paris appeared to be infatuated with  
 " their patriotism, I said, ' They are imposing on you.'---  
 " Whether the event has justified my idea or not, I leave  
 " to you. I have often blamed the mean and clumsy  
 " conduct of certain men who were *all for the constitution*,  
 " *and nothing but the constitution*. I a long time foresaw,  
 " that a serious catastrophe must necessarily result from that  
 " *constitution*, revised as it was by selfish men, who (like  
 " those I have already mentioned) laboured only for them-  
 " selves, and particularly from the character of the in-  
 " triguers who defended it. Diffimulation, rapaciousness,  
 " and cowardice, were the attributes of those quacks---  
 " fanaticism, intrepidity, and frankness, constituted the  
 " character of their enemies---it was not necessary, there-  
 " fore, to be very long-sighted to see who would pre-  
 " vail."

The attention with which I was heard, and which I own  
 I did not expect, gave me courage, and I was going to  
 assign a number of reasons which made me prefer the go-  
 vernment of a *republic* to that of *the constitution*, and to  
 repeat what I had said every day in the shop of M. De-  
 senne, when in came the keeper in great consternation, to  
 give the alarm, that a prisoner was making his escape up  
 the chimney. The President gave orders that he should be  
 fired upon; but at the same time said, that if he escaped,  
 the turnkey should answer for it with his head---it was the  
 wretched Mausobré---he was fired at several times, and the  
 turnkey seeing that did not succeed, lighted some straw,  
 the smoke of which brought him down half suffocated,  
 and he was dispatched before the gate of the prison.

I resumed my discourse, saying, " Nobody, Gentlemen,  
 " has wished more than I have done for a reform of abuses;

“there are pamphlets of my writing, both before and during the sittings of the States General, to prove what I say. I have always thought that we were going too great lengths for a *constitution*, and not far enough for a *republic*; I am neither *Jacobin* nor *Feuillant*. I did not admire the principles of the former, although much more consistent than those of the latter, which I shall detest, until it shall be proved, that the *Feuillants* are not the cause of all the evils we have experienced. At last we have got rid of them, and——”

*A Judge with an air of importance.*] “You keep telling us that you are not this, nor that, what are you then?”

“I was a royalist.”

This produced a general murmur, which was miraculously appeased by the Judge who seemed to be interested for me, and who said, word for word :

“It is not to judge of opinions that we are here, but to judge of the result of them.”

Scarce were these precious words uttered, when I exclaimed, “Yes, Gentlemen, ’tis true I was a royalist, but I never was paid for being one---I was a royalist, because I thought that a monarchical government suited my country; and because I honestly loved the King for his own sake. I preserved this sentiment in my breast till the 10th of August.”

The murmur that was then raised sounded more favourably for me; and, in order to keep up the good opinion they had of me to the end, I added——

“I have never heard mention made of conspiracies, but when the public was expressing its indignation at them. Whenever I have had an opportunity of assisting a man, I did it without asking what his principles were.---Here are journals, even patriotic ones, to prove what I have the honour to tell you. I have always been beloved by  
“ the



" the peasants of the estate of which I was lord; for at the  
 " time my neighbours' houses were set on fire, I was at  
 " home at Saint Méard. The peasants came in crowds to  
 " testify to me the pleasure they had to see me, and set up a  
 " May-pole in my court. I am sensible that these details  
 " must appear to you triflingly minute; but, Gentlemen, only  
 " put yourselves in my place, and judge whether this is not the  
 " moment to make the most of all the truths which may be  
 " of use to me. I affirm, that not one soldier of the King's  
 " regiment of infantry, in which I served twenty-five years,  
 " has any reason to complain of me: and I may boast too, of  
 " being one of the officers the most beloved by them. The  
 " last proof they gave me of this was not equivocal, since  
 " two days before the affair at Nanci, at the very time when  
 " their mistrust of their officers was the greatest, they ap-  
 " pointed me their general, and obliged me to command the  
 " army that went to Lunéville, in order to release thirty  
 " troopers of the regiment of Mestre de Camp, whom the  
 " Carabineers had made prisoners, and to take from them  
 " General Malfeigne."

*One of the Judges.*] " I shall soon see whether you have  
 " served in the King's regiment.---Did you know M. Moreau  
 " of that regiment?"

" Yes, Sir; I knew two of that name; one of them was  
 " very tall, extremely lusty, and a very steady man---the  
 " other was very short, remarkably thin, and very ——."

I made a motion with my hand, to express that he was a little  
 flighty.

*The same Judge.*] " That's the very man. I see you knew  
 " him."

We had proceeded so far, when one of the prison doors  
 leading upon the stair-case was opened, and I saw three men  
 escorting M. Marguerite, formerly Mayor, once my com-  
 rade in the King's regiment, and my fellow-prisoner in the  
 Abbey.

Abbey. He was placed, in order to wait till my trial was over, in the very corner where I had been put.

I resumed my defence :

“ After the unhappy affair of Nanci, I came to Paris, where I have been ever since. I was arrested in my apartment twelve days ago. So little did I expect it, that I went out just as I usually had done. Nothing in my possession has been sealed up; because nothing suspicious was found. My name has never been in the civil list. I have signed no petition. I have had no improper correspondence. I have not been out of France since the Revolution. During my residence in the capital, I have been peaceable and quiet. I have given way to my natural gaiety, which, as well as my principles, has never permitted me to interfere seriously in public affairs, and still less to do harm to any one.

“ This, Gentlemen, is all the account I am able to give of my conduct and principles. The sincerity of my confession should convince you that I am not a dangerous man. This induces me to hope that you will have the goodness to grant me my liberty, to which I am much attached by nature and principle.”

*The President, taking off his hat, said,*] “ I see nothing that renders this Gentleman suspicious. I grant him his liberty. Is this your opinion, Gentlemen ?”

*All the Judges.*] “ Yes, yes,---it is just.”

Scarcely were these divine words uttered, when all those who were in the room embraced me. I heard over my head peals of applause, and cries of bravo. I lifted up my eyes, and observed many heads crowded together against the bars of the air-hole of the prison; and, as they had their eyes open and in motion, I concluded that the confused and alarming buzzing, which I had heard during my examination, came from thence.

The



The President deputed three persons to go and announce to the people the judgement which had just been given. Whilst this was proclaiming, I begged of my judges to let me have a statement of what they had just pronounced in my favour, which they promised me. The President asked me why I did not wear the Cross of Saint Louis, which he knew I had. I answered, "that my fellow-prisoners had persuaded me to take it off." He told me, "that as the National Assembly had not yet prohibited the wearing of it, it looked suspicious not to wear it." The three Deputies returned, and made me put on my hat, and conducted me out of the prison. As soon as I was in the street, one of them cried, "Off, off with your hats, Citizens, this is the man for whom your judges demand aid and protection." After saying this, the executive power, (that is, the executioners) led me away; and, by the light of four flambeaux, I was embraced by all around me. All the spectators cried out, *Long live the Nation!* These honours, which made a sensible impression on me, put me under the protection of the people, who applauded and let me pass attended by the three Deputies, whom the President had ordered to escort me home. One of them told me, that he was a mason, and was settled in the Fauxbourg Saint Germain---another, that he was a native of Bourges, and was an apprentice to a barber---and the third, who had on the uniform of the National Guards, told me that he was a Federate. As we were going along, the mason asked me, if I was afraid.---"No more than you," said I to him. "You must have perceived, that I was not intimidated during my trial: surely, then, I need not tremble in the street."---"You would be to blame," said he, "to be afraid; for now the people look upon you as sacred; and if any one were to touch you, he would be put to death instantly. I saw clearly that you was not one of those caterpillars of the

civil

“ civil list; but I quaked for you when you said that you  
 “ was a King’s Officer. Do you recollect that I trod upon  
 “ your foot ?”---“ Yes; but I thought that it was one of  
 “ the judges.”---“ No, in truth, ’twas I. I thought that  
 “ you was going to run your neck into the halter; and I  
 “ should have been sorry to have seen you put to death; but  
 “ you are come off very well; and I am very glad of it, be-  
 “ cause I love people that are not fallen.” Being now ar-  
 rived in the street, Saint Benôit, we got into a hackney-  
 coach, which conveyed us to my lodgings. The first thing  
 my landlord, *my friend*, did, on seeing me, was to offer his  
 pocket-book to my attendants, who refused it, saying, (*for  
 these are their own words,*) “ We don’t do this business for  
 “ money. There is your friend;---he has promised us a  
 “ glass of brandy; we will drink it, and return to our post.”  
 They asked me for a certificate, setting forth, that they had  
 conducted me safe home. I gave them one, desiring them  
 at the same time to send me that which the judges had pro-  
 mised me, as well as my effects, which I had left in the  
 Abbey Prison. I accompanied them to the street, where I  
 embraced them most heartily. The next day one of the  
 Commissioners brought me the certificate, of which the fol-  
 lowing is a copy :

WE, Commissioners appointed by the people to do  
 justice on the traitors imprisoned in the Abbey, caused  
 to appear before us, on the 4th of September, the Ci-  
 tizen Jourgniac Saint Méard, formerly an Officer who  
 had the Cross of Saint Louis, who has proved that the ac-  
 cusations brought against him were false, and that he has  
 never been concerned in a plot against the Patriots. We  
 accordingly caused him to be proclaimed innocent in the  
 presence of the people, who approved of his being set  
 at liberty by us. In testimony whereof, we have, at  
 his



his request; given him this certificate. And we intreat  
all our Citizens to grant him aid and protection.

(Signed) POIR——— BER———.

At the Abbey, the 4th Year of Liberty,  
and the 1st of Equality.

After having taken a little rest, I was anxious to discharge the duties which friendship and gratitude imposed on me; and I circulated a printed letter, imparting my happy release to all those who I knew had any concern for my disaster. I walked the same day in the garden of the Citizen Equality (heretofore Duke of Orleans.) I saw several persons rubbing their eyes, to see if it was me; others started back as if they had seen a ghost. I was embraced even by those who did not know me. In short it was a joyous day for me. But from what has since been told me, and written to me, and from what I have seen published, I have been induced to consider how unfavourable to me might be the effect of my imprisonment on the minds of those who do not know me; and especially at a time when they believe, condemn, and execute with so much precipitation. I have, therefore, thought it a matter of importance to me to counteract such effect; and I have related the truth.

*Extract from the Speech of M. PETHION, the Mayor of Paris,  
upon the Accusation of M. ROBERSPIERRE.*

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“ **O**N the 2d of September, the alarm is given by the  
 “ firing of guns, and the ringing of bells---O  
 “ day of sorrow ! At these dismal and alarming sounds the  
 “ citizens assemble---they rush into the prisons---they mas-  
 “ sacre---they assassinate. Manuel and several deputies of  
 “ the National Assembly repair to these places of slaughter ;  
 “ but their efforts are vain—Victims fall even in their arms !  
 “ Meanwhile I was in a false security.—I was ignorant of  
 “ these cruelties. Nothing had been communicated to me  
 “ for some time. At length these horrors reach my ears ;---  
 “ but how ? In a very vague, indirect, and imperfect way ;  
 “ and I am at the same time informed that all is over. Soon  
 “ after the most shocking accounts are brought to me : but  
 “ I was fully convinced that the sun, which had risen on  
 “ these horrid scenes, would never give light to such ano-  
 “ ther day ; and yet they continue. I write to the Com-  
 “ mandant General for troops to be sent to the prisons. At  
 “ first I receive no answer. I write again. I am then told  
 “ that he has given orders. There is, however, no appear-  
 “ ance of the execution of any such orders. The cruelties  
 “ still continue. I then go myself to the council of the  
 “ commune ; and from thence to the hotel de la Force,  
 “ with



" with several of my colleagues. Citizens, not very nu-  
 " multuous, filled the streets leading to the prison. I found  
 " a small guard at the door. I enter. Never, no, never,  
 " will the spectacle, that presented itself to my eyes, be ef-  
 " faced from my heart ! I saw two officers in their sashes ; I  
 " then saw three men sitting quietly at a table, with the  
 " goaler's book open before them, calling over the prisoners,  
 " Other men, putting questions to them---others perform-  
 " ing the offices of juries and of judges---a dozen of execu-  
 " tioners, with their arms naked and covered with gore ;  
 " some of them with clubs in their hands ; and others with  
 " hangers and cutlasses streaming with blood, instantly exe-  
 " cuting the sentences pronounced---Citizens on the outside  
 " impatiently awaiting the sentences---observing the most  
 " profound and fullen silence at a decree of death, and shout-  
 " ing with joy at an acquittal.---And both the men who  
 " judged, and the men who executed, seemed to be in the  
 " same state of security, as if they had been appointed by  
 " the law to discharge those offices. They boasted of their  
 " justice, of their great attention to distinguish the innocent  
 " from the guilty, and of the services they had rendered :---  
 " and they wanted---can it be believed ?---they wanted to  
 " be paid for the time they had thus passed. I was confound-  
 " ed at hearing them. I spoke to them the stern language of  
 " the law. I spoke to them with sentiments of the deepest  
 " indignation. I made them all go out before me ; and  
 " scarce had I quitted the prison myself, when they return-  
 " ed. Again I returned there, to drive them out. In the  
 " night they completed their horrid butchery."

---

Thus perished, by the most moderate accounts, in the  
 space of two days and nights, near five thousand persons,  
 2 priests,

priests, nobles, citizens, soldiers, and women—and not even an attempt has yet been made to bring the merciless assassins to justice.

To avoid a similar fate, full forty thousand French of all ranks and descriptions have fled to the different countries of Europe—condemned, unheard, to banishment, confiscation of property, and the last extremity of wretchedness and want—some for having adhered conscientiously to the religion and constitution of their country—others for having refused, though, in the beginning, favourers of the Revolution, to go all the lengths dictated by a wild, cruel, and fanatic mob.

Are these examples to be proposed to Englishmen?

F I N I S



This printed by the press of the printer, in the  
 street of the city, near the church of St. Martin  
 in the year 1793.



